



>>> VISTA Leader Action Learning Challenge VAD Team: Spring 2013



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Introduction to 365 Days of VISTA Guide

Goal

This resource is designed to help VISTA Leaders effectively use the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) to guide, mentor, and coach VISTA members to high performance and project success over the course of their service year.

Background

The VAD is a tool that members should use to help gain an understanding of their project goal, as well as the objectives and steps required to achieve that goal. The VISTA Leader can continually utilize members' VADs to help VISTAs better understand their project role and how they can achieve high performance and project success throughout the year.

To determine if VISTA members are accomplishing their objectives throughout the year, two primary questions should be continuously considered:

- 1. What should the member be accomplishing according to his or her VAD?
- 2. Are the needs of the project, organization, and member being met?

A Leader's approach to helping VISTA members answer these questions will change throughout the VISTA term as the members' work progresses. Additionally, the needs of the VISTA project, sponsor organization, and members will often change during the year, and the VISTA Leader will need to support VISTAs as they adapt to new circumstances.

Team Considerations

While creating this guidebook of resources, our team kept two considerations in mind:

- 1. The VISTA Leader's role is distinct from the supervisor's role. It is important for the Leader and VISTAs to communicate with the VISTA supervisor as they work with these resources to ensure the VISTA is addressing the organization's needs.
- 2. VISTAs will use this resource after an initial VAD analysis during PSO, so Leaders should factor in the work completed at PSO as VISTAs enter Phase 1.

Our Approach

To help VISTA Leaders understand how to effectively use the VAD with VISTA members throughout their term and answer these primary questions, we have broken down the VISTA term into three phases: *Getting Started* (months 1-3), *The Work Period* (months 4-8), and *Building Toward the Future* (months 9-12). Each phase identifies the key VISTA Leader roles, common challenges VISTA members face, best practices for dealing with those challenges, and resources to use in conjunction with the VAD to help VISTA members achieve high performance during that specific phase.

VISTA LEADER ROLES

Adapted from VISTA Campus

AMBASSADOR

Definition

Ambassadors serve as representatives or messengers for certain institutions or interests. As a VISTA Leader, you represent national and community service in your town or city and region. You are a spokesperson and advocate for VISTA, your sponsoring organization, and their respective missions. You also represent an ethic of service demonstrated by your individual commitment to serve.

Role Objectives

The Ambassador's goal is to promote the national and community service movement and raise awareness about AmeriCorps VISTA. This means letting people know about successful VISTA projects, encouraging community volunteers to get involved in VISTA projects, and raising visibility for AmeriCorps VISTA. The Ambassador role aims to create mutually beneficial relationships that strengthen VISTA members and their projects. These relationships may range from simple commitments to well-defined partnerships or strategic alliances.

MENTOR

Definition

A mentor is a trusted counselor or guide, a tutor, or coach. As a VISTA Leader, you have a role in influencing and guiding VISTA members toward achieving their VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) goals. In a nutshell, a mentor guides more than directs. Mentoring can be a peer-to-peer relationship or it can be a relationship between an individual with more experience who shares information and skills with one who is less experienced. Mentoring can also be a combination of the two in which varying levels of experience in different areas can be shared within the partnership. Mentoring can also be formal or casual/informal.

Role Objectives

The Mentor's goal is to foster a purposeful relationship between him or herself and VISTA member(s) interested in developing skills and finding opportunities for personal and professional growth. The assumption underlying the mentoring relationship is that the mentee is trustworthy, competent, dedicated, and motivated to grow and develop with support from the mentor. At times, the informal mentor will be called on to guide the mentee through a challenging situation. In this way, the VISTA Leader's goal is to act as an ally or coach to VISTA members when they are struggling.

RECRUITER

Definition

Recruiters persuade others to unite their abilities and expertise to achieve common goals. A Recruiter is responsible for finding the right VISTA(s) for the next year's open VISTA position(s). As a Recruiter, the VISTA Leader is responsible for "selling" the position; the site; the agency; VISTA; national service; and a city, town, or region of the country. It also means being a matchmaker and connecting someone's skills and desires with the requirements and vision of the position and shared VISTA goal of eliminating poverty.

Role Objectives

The goal of the Recruiter is to advertise open VISTA placements and attract as many qualified applicants as possible. In order to be truly effective as a VISTA Recruiter, it helps to view the role as a series of small steps: (1) Gather information about the anticipated VISTA Assignment Description, (2) Develop a recruitment plan, (3) Implement the plan, and (4) Evaluate the plan.

FACILITATOR/EDUCATOR

Definition

Facilitators foster and maintain mutually respectful, safe, and meaningful learning environments. As a VISTA Leader, this means you will help identify VISTA members' learning and development goals and work with them to achieve those goals. Educators are responsible for imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes to group members. This transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes occurs both formally and informally in serving as a teacher, instructor, and/or role model. The Facilitator/Educator role requires you to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to VISTA members to help contribute to a meaningful service experience and successful project outcome. In some cases, VISTA Leaders act as educators to directly impart knowledge. More often, however, VISTA Leaders facilitate learning and reflection by identifying and creating learning and growth opportunities for members to engage in.

Role Objectives

The first goal of the Facilitator/Educator is to create opportunities for VISTA members to reflect on and learn from their service experience. The second goal is to facilitate opportunities for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that contribute to meaningful and productive projects and personal growth among VISTA members.

LIAISON

Definition

A Liaison is someone who connects two or more individuals or groups. The role of the Liaison requires the VISTA Leader to be constantly aware of the relationships between key players (self, members, supervisor, sponsor, state office, community) and to identify the needs of these players. These needs may be as complex as resolving conflicts between a VISTA member and the sponsor site, or as simple as connecting a VISTA member with someone who can help her to meet her project goals. The Liaison role involves acting as a communication link and a conflict resolver/mediator.

Role Objectives

The ultimate goal of the Liaison is to bring people together. Part of your responsibility as a VISTA Leader is to ensure relationships between team members are on track and that members have what they need in order to accomplish the goals set out in their VISTA Assignment Description. Therefore, as a Liaison you may be the person members come to when they have a conflict or an unmet need.

RESOURCE GENERATOR

Definition

Resource Generators identify and build relationships that lead to the acquisition of needed resources. These resources generally include, but are not limited to, money, materials, supplies, people, knowledge, information, partnerships, and alliances. This role requires the VISTA Leader to actively identify, link, educate, and connect themselves and other VISTA members with those who have power and influence when it comes to getting the resources you need. This role depends on the VISTA Leader's ability to build and constantly expand a network of relationships.

Role Objectives

The Resource Generator's primary objective is to facilitate VISTA members' successful completion of project tasks by helping them access the resources they need.

Phase 1: Months 1 - 3 Getting Started

VISTA members are enthusiastic, but may also feel unsure about where to begin with their project. PSO presents general information about being a VISTA and poverty, but after they leave PSO, VISTAs realize they need more insight and information about their specific site and project. They may require additional resources, guidance on how to establish a strong relationship with their supervisor, or coaching on how create an effective work plan and develop the strategy to utilize it. Throughout this phase, VISTAs will work with their VADs in conjunction with the supervision from their supervisors and guidance from their Leader to develop a work plan that fits their skills and interests, and the needs and objectives of their host site.

Primary Questions

- 1. What should the member be accomplishing according to his or her VAD?
- 2. Are the needs of the project, organization, and member being met?

This discussion begins as soon as the VISTA arrives for On-Site Orientation, and these questions should be formally re-evaluated at the beginning of each new phase.

Phase 1 Secondary Questions

1. What are the objectives, member activities, and timeline of the member's assignment?

The VAD identifies both an overall project goal and specific activities a VISTA member will work on throughout the year. The VISTA Leader should encourage the VISTA and site supervisor to discuss specific VAD objectives and activities and develop an action plan for the year together. The VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix resource can help the VISTA and site supervisor explore different VISTA activity areas; action items; and steps to plan, implement, and sustain each activity to determine objectives, activities, and a timeline for the year. Use Resource A to facilitate this conversation.

2. Are the objectives and activities feasible, and what are the challenges of the project?

The VISTA will need to develop an understanding of the community, available resources, and other available assets before he or she can determine the feasibility of the VAD objectives and address the challenges that may come up throughout the year in implementing the work plan. The VISTA Leader should urge the VISTA to learn as much as possible about the community and explore available resources at the start of the VISTA term. The Asset Map resource can assist the VISTA in identifying and tracking a wide array of available resources. The VISTA Leader can then encourage the VISTA and site supervisor to discuss the VAD and Project Plan while referencing the Asset Map so feasibility issues and challenges can be addressed proactively. Use Resource B to facilitate this conversation.

3. What are the member's strengths, needs, and personal and professional goals, and how can those be incorporated into the VISTA's service year?

The VISTA, site supervisor, and VISTA Leader should identify the VISTAs strengths, needs, and personal and professional goals as part of the On-Site Orientation, so the VAD, Project Plan, and member support can be personalized to the VISTA selected for the position. The On-Site Orientation – Professional Development Questionnaire resource will help the site supervisor prepare an orientation that ensures the VISTA and supervisor share this information with one another and have this knowledge in mind as they develop a project plan for the year that plays to the VISTA's strengths, and helps the VISTA develop desired skills and work toward personal and professional goals. Use Resource C to facilitate this conversation.

Phase 1 Leader Roles:

What roles does the Leader fill when using the VISTA VAD to guide, mentor, and coach VISTA members during Phase 1?

Facilitator/Educator

During this phase, the Leader will encourage VISTAs and supervisors to work together to develop a project plan, so that activities are broken down into specific, more manageable steps. The Leader also should review the VAD and project plan with the VISTA and supervisor to identify areas where the VISTA may need additional training. The VISTA Leader may direct VISTAs to resources and training opportunities or provide team trainings for all members.

Examples of potential Phase 1 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice Example
Create marketing plan to market the mentor program to targeted audiences	The VISTA has never created a marketing plan and is unsure of where to begin.	The Leader facilitates a conversation between the VISTA and supervisor to address expectations listed on the VAD and develop a project plan to break down each VAD milestone activity into more manageable steps. (Use Resource A)
Develop systems for screening and matching mentors	The VISTA has conducted research about various volunteer screening systems and is overwhelmed by the amount of information available.	The Leader encourages the VISTA to discuss the various screening systems with the supervisor and other organization staff. Together they can decide which system will work best for their organization.

Mentor

The Leader will need to develop a purposeful relationship with the VISTAs by learning more about the members and their personal and professional goals and how they want to grow and develop during their year as a VISTA. This will allow Leaders to better understand the type of support VISTAs may need to reach these goals.

Examples of potential Phase 1 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice Example
Create marketing plan to market the mentor program to targeted audiences	The VISTA has never created a marketing plan and is unsure of where to begin.	The Leader's VAD in the previous year also included an activity focusing on developing a marketing plan. The Leader discusses the strategies she used in her previous year in conducting research, developing a marketing plan suitable for the organization, and carrying out the plan with the VISTA. She also shares challenges she faced and positive ways she approached these challenges.

Resource Generator

The Leader will need to share information on resources, grant opportunities, and community partners and support VISTAs in conducting their own research to identify these opportunities and partnerships.

Examples of potential Phase 1 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice example
Create marketing plan to market the mentor program to targeted audiences	The VISTA has never created a marketing plan and is unsure of where to begin.	The VISTA Leader directs the VISTA to marketing resources with sample plans. The Leader also shares the contact information for another VISTA on the team with a similar VAD activity, providing the two VISTAs with the asset map resource, so that they can develop a database of resources to upload on the project website and share with other VISTAs on the team. (Use <i>Resource B</i>)
Develop partnerships with people or organizations that understand the needs of children with incarcerated parents and can assist with the training and support of mentors	The VISTA is excited about working with new partners, but doesn't have a lot of experience developing partnerships. She expresses to the Leader that she is nervous she'll do a poor job and lose potential partners.	The VISTA Leader encourages the VISTA to study the organizations she has already listed on her asset map and identify organizations that are well connected in the community and that utilize many successful partnerships in their programs. She encourages the VISTA to contact a program coordinator at one of these organizations to discuss how the program has developed so many great partnerships. (Use <i>Resource B</i>)
Research and apply for small grants to support the mentor program	The VISTA is overwhelmed by the number of grants available and can't decide which ones to apply for.	The VISTA Leader recommends that the VISTA apply for the VISTA Blend course on Grantwriting and Fundraising in order to build more skills around grant writing.

Phase 1 Resources:

- Resource A: VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix & Monthly Action Plan...... pp. 15-19
- *Provide to VISTA at start of service
- *Provide to VISTA at start of service
- Resource C: On-Site Orientation Professional Development Questionnaire.... pp. 22-23
- *Provide to site supervisor prior to start of VISTA's service

Phase 2: Months 4 - 8 The Work Period

VISTA members should understand their role and what they need to accomplish. The Leader's role is to provide needed resources for VISTAs, help VISTAs think creatively to address challenges, and assist VISTAs in staying on track with their project plans.

Primary Questions

- 1. What should the member be accomplishing according to his or her VAD?
- 2. Are the needs of the project, organization, and member being met?

Phase 2 Secondary Questions

1. Are the objectives of the project being met?

A primary role for the VISTA Leader during this phase is Facilitator. As a facilitator, the Leader helps members reflect on their accomplishments, evaluate their progress on VAD objectives, and create a plan for moving forward. **Use** *Resource E* **to** *facilitate* **this** *conversation*.

2. What resources are needed?

The Leader acts as Resource Generator during this phase and connects members with the resources necessary to continue progress on their VAD goals and objectives. <u>Use *Resource B* to guide this process.</u>

3. Have objectives changed for the project?

VISTA members may discover that VAD objectives change during their term of service because of issues outside of their control. If an organization loses funding, a VISTA member might need to reevaluate their plan to incorporate additional fundraising activities. The Leader should assist members in evaluating new activities to make sure they build capacity and are sustainable. <u>Use</u> *Resource D* to facilitate this discussion.

4. Are challenges being embraced as opportunities?

All VISTA members will experience some type of challenge at their organizations. The Leader helps members embrace these challenges as opportunities. <u>Use Resource F to facilitate this</u> conversation.

Phase 2 Leader Roles:

What roles does the Leader fill when using the VISTA VAD to guide, mentor, and coach VISTA members during Phase 2?

Facilitator/Educator

During this stage, members may experience frustration with challenges at their site, with their project, and with community partners. The Leader must keep members focused on the work they are doing and not let them get discouraged by the challenges. As a Leader, you may also need to connect members to opportunities for additional skill development.

Examples of potential Phase 2 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role
Create marketing plan to market the mentor program to targeted audiences	The VISTA started a Facebook page to market the program, but its audience has plateaued, and the VISTA needs to determine how to increase page "likes."	The VISTA Leader connects the VISTA to a local training on managing social media that specifically addresses how to reach a wider audience.
Develop systems for screening and matching mentors	The VISTA spent the beginning of the year researching various volunteer tracking systems. The system that would be the best option is more expensive than the organization budgeted.	The VISTA Leader refers the VISTA to resources on grant research, so the VISTA can find a grant to provide additional volunteer system funding.

Mentor

During Phase 2, the VISTA Leader may need to regularly check in with members to see how they are doing at their site.

Examples of potential Phase 2 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role
Create marketing plan to market the mentor program to targeted audiences	The VISTA utilized various resources to create a draft marketing plan for the organization. The staff seems hesitant to implement the recommendations, especially when methods are new and unfamiliar.	The VISTA Leader had a similar experience last year as a VISTA. The Leader validates the frustrations with the member and encourages the VISTA to choose pieces of the plan to focus on implementing to give staff members time to adjust to new ideas.

Resource Generator

During this phase, VISTA members may feel like they've reached a crossroads with their assignments because they do not have the resources necessary to complete the work. The VISTA Leader may need to connect members to community partners, grant opportunities, additional trainings, etc. in order for members to complete their assignments.

Examples of potential Phase 2 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role
Develop partnerships with people or organizations that understand the needs of children of prisoners and can assist with the training and support of mentors	The VISTA made a lot of connections earlier in the year, but feels like important connections are still missing.	The VISTA Leader helps the member re-evaluate the asset map from the beginning of the year to determine what gaps the organization has in partnerships and connections. The Leader shares asset maps from other VISTAs in the same area to help the member identify key people to contact. (Use <i>Resource B</i>)
Write volunteer task descriptions	The VISTA has made some great progress on the mentoring program and is starting the process of recruiting volunteers. However, the mentor volunteer description has not been determined yet.	The VISTA Leader provides sample volunteer position descriptions from well-known mentoring programs, so the VISTA can determine what qualifications and expectations are needed for the program.

Phase 2 Resources:

• Resource D: Evaluating Activities *Share with VISTA during Phase 2	p. 24
• Resource E: Creating a Plan for Moving Forward	p. 25
• Resource F: Stop, Start, Continue*Share with VISTA during Phase 2	р. 26

<u>Phase 3: Months 9 - 12</u> <u>Building Toward the Future</u>

VISTA members can easily become overwhelmed at the end of the service year. Members may begin to focus on what they will do after they complete their year and become frustrated as they worry about how they will accomplish remaining objectives and activities. By using the VAD to showcase the milestones they have reached and the resources they have developed, the VISTA Leader can help members better understand how to use their accomplishments to navigate down the road that leads to the "next step(s)" or "future plan(s)" they see best suited for themselves.

Primary Questions

- 1. What should the member be accomplishing according to his or her VAD?
- 2. Are the needs of the project, organization, and member being met?

Phase 3 Secondary Questions

1. What has been achieved, and what will members take away from their year?

"What you put in is what you get out." Every VISTA will have unique accomplishments from their service terms. The VISTA Leader should encourage VISTAs to evaluate their progress, reviewing their VAD and the various resources from phase 1 and 2, and adapt their project plans as they move closer to the end of their service term. **Use** *Resource A* to facilitate this conversation.

2. How were challenges embraced as opportunities?

All VISTA members will experience some type of challenge at their organizations. The Leader can help members embrace these challenges as opportunities. <u>Use Resource F to facilitate this</u> conversation.

3. What VAD enhancing recommendations does the VISTA member have for moving the VISTA Project forward, and what is the next step for the project?

As VISTA members end their year, they should have insight into how their role and VAD can be enhanced for future members. The VISTA Leader should listen to suggestions from the members and take these ideas to supervisors as they develop positions and VADs for the future. The Leader should also work with supervisors to decide what the next steps for the VISTA project should be. As a Leader, you should be providing suggestions on VAD development to site supervisors, not writing VADs for supervisors. Use Resource H to facilitate this conversation.

4. How can members use their achievements in the next stage of their life?

The Leader should guide VISTAs in identifying the skills they gained and goals they achieved during the year. The Leader will help VISTAs clarify their accomplishments as they work toward personal and professional goals. **Use** *Resources G and H* to facilitate this conversation.

Phase 3 Leader Roles:

What roles does the Leader fill when using the VISTA VAD to guide, mentor, and coach VISTA members during Phase 3?

Facilitator/Educator

During Phase 3, the VISTA Leader will facilitate end-of-year conversations between supervisors and VISTA members; provide tools and support that allow VISTAs to successfully transition out of their year; encourage VISTAs to identify accomplishment, transferrable skills, and areas for further development; and share resources to help VISTAs ensure the sustainability of their work.

Examples of potential Phase 3 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice example
Research and apply for small grants to support the mentor program	The VISTA is overwhelmed by the number of grants available and can't decide which ones to apply for.	The Leader should encourage the VISTA to meet with his supervisor and identify priorities, values, and sustainability issues for the future of the project. This can highlight important factors in deciding which grants the program may want to apply for in the future. (Use Resource H)

Ambassador

The Leader will connect VISTAs to AmeriCorps and VISTA alumni groups and associations, work with VISTAs to quantify their VAD successes, and encourage VISTAs to continue to promote AmeriCorps VISTA after their service term.

Examples of potential Phase 3 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice example
Research and apply for small grants to support the mentor program	The grant application was denied, and the VISTA member is feeling down about his abilities as he looks towards future endeavors. This in-turn negatively affects the quality of work the VISTA has been producing recently.	The Leader can walk through the VAD with the VISTA, asking him to highlight transferrable skills gained and strengthened throughout the year. The Leader can remind the VISTA that a few months are left to re-focus and learn or further develop specific skills. The Leader can also use the Stop, Start, Continue resource to help the VISTA review past challenges that the VISTA has successfully addressed. (Use Resources F and G)

Mentor

During this last phase, the Leader will encourage VISTAs to gather tangible project documents and accomplishments to be readily available to showcase for future endeavors. The Leader will also provide positive encouragement as VISTAs explore and recognize the value of the service they provided to their sites and communities.

Examples of potential Phase 3 challenges

Member Activity from VAD	Challenge	Leader's Role/Best Practice example
Research and apply for small grants to support the mentor program	The VISTA member has struggled greatly with this task and feels he hasn't received enough support from his site. The member is thinking about leaving the site early.	The Leader should reassure the VISTA by having him identify the reasons why he became a VISTA in the first place. Then, the Leader can ask the VISTA to brainstorm ways to improve the remaining few months. (Use Resource C)

Phase 3 Resources:

Appendix

365 Days of VISTA	
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Resources

Resource A: VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix & Monthly Action Plan

Understanding your VAD

Each of you received a Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD) upon entrance into the AmeriCorps VISTA program. The VAD is meant as a description of the goal, objectives, and activities to be completed over the course of your service year. The goal in your VAD should not change without approval from your site supervisor and CNCS State Office, but the objectives and activities to reach your goal may alter as the needs of your organization and its programs shift throughout the year. Because of this, AmeriCorps VISTA members should understand and be accommodating to changes in circumstances and the need to adapt your plan to achieve the overall goal and objectives.

At no point is your VAD ever definite, but at no point should it be changed without your understanding and agreement. As you start your year, take time to talk with your supervisor about your VAD and the site's expectations, using the following project action plan matrix as a guide for developing a project plan for the year with your supervisor. The monthly action plan outlines how you will put your project plan into action in your first month and into your service year.

VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix

- 1. Study your VAD. Which of the major activity areas listed in the matrix will you focus on during your year? Next to these activity areas list the objectives identified in your VAD.
- 2. How will you go about achieving these activities? Discuss with your supervisor what steps you will take to plan, implement, and ensure the sustainability of each of your major activities. List these steps in the "Member Activities" column.
- 3. Take this opportunity to share with your supervisor your thoughts and concerns about these VAD activities. Express areas you feel you may need additional support in order to reach specified outcomes.
- 4. How will you know when you have completed an activity? With your supervisor, identify and then list specific outcomes that will result from each activity in the "Deliverables" column.
- 5. Now, think about a rough timeline for the year. Which activities will you focus on first and how long do you think you will need to complete each? Discuss with your supervisor when he or she would like each activity accomplished. Together with your supervisor, designate dates by which you will work to achieve deliverables.
- 6. Now you have a project plan from which to start your year! Remember that this document is a rough draft and reviewing, evaluating, and updating with your supervisor will be necessary throughout the year.

Monthly Action Plan

- 1. Review your project plan. What activities will you need to complete during your first month to meet your timeline? Develop a list of objectives for the month based on these activities and list them at the top of the monthly action plan. Now break these action items down by week and list what you would like to accomplish each week in order to achieve the listed objectives.
- 2. Review your action plan at the end of each week and edit it as necessary. Remember that changes may occur at your organization or new projects may be developed that need to be prioritized, so your action plan will evolve throughout the month.
- 3. At the end of the month, review your progress toward accomplishing the major objectives and activities on your project plan and develop an action plan for the next month.

Sample VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix Adapted from Project STAR VISTA Matrix resource *See pp. 35 - 36 for a blank matrix.

,	Activity Area	Objective (from VAD)	Member Activities		Deliverables	Timeline
	Volunteer	- Create or revise	Planning-	-Develop volunteer mentor	-Volunteer mentor	-by Feb 15
	Generation	policies, procedures,	Action Items →	generation plan	generation plan	by res is
		and documents to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the		-Create or revise policies, procedures, and documents for the volunteer mentor program	-Revised policies and procedures documents	-by Feb 20
urces		mentor-recruitment and matching		-Develop partnerships for recruiting mentors	-5 partnerships developed	-by Feb 30
e and Reso		system.		-Complete a mentor manual/training curriculum	-1 mentor manual and 1 training curriculum developed	-by Feb 30
uctur			Implementation- Action Items →	-Recruit volunteer mentors	-16 volunteer mentors recruited	-by Mar 15
rastr				-Train & place mentors	-12 mentors trained and placed	-by April 1
onal Inf			Sustainability- Action Items →	-Formalize volunteer mentor positions	-Volunteer mentor positions formalized	-by May 1
Organizational Infrastructure and Resources				-Continue recruitment, training, & supervision	-5 additional mentors trained and placed; 10/12 original mentors still volunteering	-by June 1
				-Develop mentor recognition program	-3 methods of mentor recognition implemented	-by June 1
				-Formalize partnerships with other agencies	-5 partnerships formalized	-by June 1

				- Train staff to manage volunteer mentor plan	-2 staff trained to manage volunteer mentor plan	-by Dec 1
	Resource Development	-Raise funds to support mentor program	Planning- Action Items →	-Develop a fundraising plan -Recruit a fundraising committee -Identify resources for fundraising	-1 fundraising plan - First fundraising committee meeting -1 database with fundraising resources	-by Mar 1 -by April 5 -by May 15
			Implementation- Action Items →	-Submit proposals -Approach donors -Launch capital campaign	- 2 proposals submitted -30 donors contacted -Capital campaign completed	- by Aug 30 - by Aug 30 - by Dec 31
			Sustainability- Action Items →	-Dollars will be raised -Funders will commit to X years of funding	-\$1,000 raised -50% of donors will commit to 5 years of funding	- by Dec 31 - by Feb 1
	Technology		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →			
ness	Community Awareness		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →			
Awareness	Partnerships and Collaborative efforts		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →			

	Community		Planning-			
	Assessment		Action Items →			
			Implementation-			
			Action Items →			
nt			Sustainability-			
me			Action Items \rightarrow			
ob			Planning-			
Community Development			Action Items →			
De	Policies and		Implementation-			
<u> </u>	Procedures		Action Items →			
ini			Sustainability-			
mı			Action Items →			
l uc	Community		Planning-			
ŭ	Training		Action Items →			
			Implementation-			
			Action Items →			
			Sustainability-			
	Curriculum		Action Items → Planning-			
	Development		Action Items →			
	Development		Implementation-			
			Action Items →			
			Sustainability-			
٠			Action Items →			
Program Development	Marketing	- Set up outreach	Planning-	-Develop outreach plan to	-1 outreach plan	-by Feb 15
udo		systems and build	Action Items →	target participants		
elc		partnerships with		-Create targeted marketing	-1 program	-by Mar 1
ev		community		materials	brochure	1 1 1 00
n D		organizations in		-Conduct presentations in	-5 presentations to	-by July 30
ran		order to spread the word about the		the community	community groups	
0g)		mentor program.		-Recruit participants	-15 participants	-by Aug 15
Pr		Develop targeted		-Recruit participants	recruited	-by riug 15
		marketing	Implementation-	-Participants will complete	-12 participants	- by June 1
		materials.	Action Items →	program	complete program	
			Sustainability-	-Increased beneficiaries	-12 participants	- by June 1
			Action Items →	served	complete program	

Monthly Action Plan

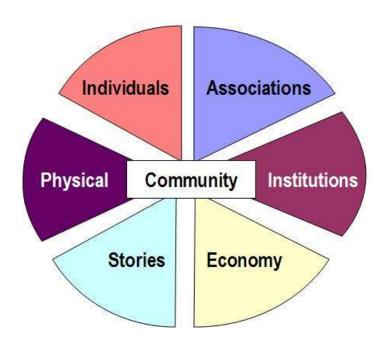
Month:		
Major Events/Dates:	Objectives:	
	1 2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
Week 1	Notes:	
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Week 2	Notes:	
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Week 3	Notes:	
1		
2		
3		
4		
5	N.	
Week 4	Notes:	
1		
2		
3		
4 5		
J		

Resource B: Asset Map

Asset Mapping - Finding your Community Resources

Asset Mapping, sometimes called resource mapping, is a good way to document the gifts, talents, and resources that exist in every community. Take the time to find out what resources are available and what strengths are used or can be developed. This is a great first step to get to know the landscape and community environment better and provides a basis for future work. Asset Mapping is an activity for the first few weeks that allows a VISTA to begin to build relationships and partnerships at the host site and in the community. Assets can range from physical spaces (like schools, libraries, or hospitals) to economics (like businesses, philanthropy, or types of employment) to voluntary associations (like a local book club or knitting group) to individual stories and wisdom (gathered through interviews and relationship building).

The following is a visual demonstration of the many types of assets in a community: Individuals, Physical space, Stories, Economy, Institutions, and Associations.



Asset Map

				Mapping Com	munity Reso	urces			
				Commi	unity Resour	ces in		_ Date of Ma	p
Title	Address	Function/Mission	Projects	s Population Main Contact Website I			Existing Partnerships	Resources Available	
									_

Resource C: On-Site Orientation - Professional Development Questionnaire

On-Site Orientation

On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT) is an extension of Pre-Service Orientation for the VISTA. It is conducted by a VISTA's sponsoring organization or host site and takes place immediately after the VISTA reports to his or her project site. Designing a comprehensive and well-thought out OSOT is important because it ensures VISTAs develop the basic knowledge and understanding needed to have a successful and fulfilling year. OSOT may continue for an extended period of time because it involves introducing VISTAs to the sponsoring organization, the local community, and their role within the community.

<u>VISTA Campus</u> provides some excellent resources to guide you in developing an OSOT plan for your VISTA.

Access these materials by ...

- 1. going to VISTA Campus (http://vistacampus.org/),
- 2. selecting the "Supervisors" tab,
- 3. scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking the "Campus Catalog" tab on the lefthand side of the screen, and
- 4. scrolling down to the section entitled "Orienting your VISTA."

Get to know your VISTA - Professional Development Questionnaire

Working through the VAD with the VISTA to develop a project plan for the year and an action plan for the first month is an essential part of your On-Site Orientation. You should also spend some time during orientation getting to know your VISTA as an individual. After all, you selected this person for a reason, and the skills and interests he or she will bring to the position and your organization will shape the coming year for both you and the VISTA. Provide the following questionnaire to your VISTA, and use the VISTA's answers to help guide this conversation.

After this discussion, go back and look over the VAD and project plan with the VISTA. Discuss whether the project plan incorporates the VISTA's personal and professional goals. If not, what needs to be added or removed? Share this information with the VISTA Leader, so he or she can develop trainings and share resources to help the VISTAs on the team work toward their goals for the year and into the future.

Continue this discussion with your VISTA throughout the year. The VISTA's goals and interests may change or the assignment may shift, and you may need to readdress items in the plan.

Professional Development Question	onnaire
Name:	Date:
Professional Development Question	nnaire
	we would like to ensure that you are given every opportunity you vorks, and ability to achieve your goals for your future.
so please take time to consider your re to answer each question. Additionally,	the questions below. Your year of service is what you make of it, esponses carefully and take as much or as little space as you need this document will assist you in tailoring your work plan to fit be plan, while still fulfilling the VISTA Project goals.
professional/personal goals? 2. What knowledge or skills do I broaden my capacity and pro 3. What knowledge or skills do I service? 4. What are the barriers or obstatime (e.g. time, money and ot 5. What can I do to overcome the help me? What resources do 6. What do I see as a reasonable of 7. What opportunities can I capit for my next step after VISTA? 8. This year, I want to challenge of the provided of the second	bring to my year of service? How can I use my strengths to eductivity? want to acquire or improve upon before the end of my term of cles that might prevent me from accomplishing my goals on ther commitments)? ese barriers or obstacles, and what resources are available to I need? next step after VISTA? calize on during my year of service in order to prepare myself? (Networking opportunities, area events, trainings, etc.)
 Verbal Acknowledgement Certificates/Awards Thank You Note Blog/Newsletter Gifts 	

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out! Please send the completed document to your supervisor and VISTA Leader.

o Other (please specify)

o Food (ex: donuts)

Resource D: Evaluating Activities

VISTA Member Activities

Non-Capacity Building	Capacity Building	Sustainable Endeavors
Recruit volunteers	Develop forms, volunteer assignments	Develop volunteer handbook
Train direct service providers	Write training curriculum or manual; train trainers	Develop training manual and train the trainer curriculum
Coordinate project	Develop procedures and systems	Develop volunteer management system and procedural guide
Public speaking	Develop speakers' bureau	Develop community partnerships
Write press releases	Develop press kits, media database	Secure media partners
Organize fundraising events	Grant writing; develop database	Secure project staffing
Organize task forces/coalitions	Develop leadership structure of task force/coalition	Create infrastructure
Conduct outreach	Design brochures, posters	Create mechanism for project evaluation

During Phase 2, VISTA members should evaluate the work they have done at their organization and determine if they are working toward building organizational capacity. Oftentimes, VISTAs are eager to help their host site and take on roles that are outside the scope of their role as VISTAs. During this mid-year point, the Leader can help members to reflect on their objectives and activities to ensure that the organization will be able to continue the work when the VISTA leaves.

Assessing VISTA Activities Example

- **Non-capacity building**: Recruit volunteers
 - What happens to this next year? Another staff member or VISTA needs to recruit volunteers
- Capacity building: Develop volunteer forms and volunteer assignments
 - o *How will this look different after you leave?* Streamlined volunteer recruitment with specific assignments
 - This is an organized approach, meaning less time is spent interviewing and placing volunteers leading to higher volunteer satisfaction.
- Sustainability: Develop volunteer handbook
 - What impact will this have? Clear expectations set for volunteers, decreased absenteeism and volunteer turnover, streamlined processes for dealing with conflicts, information remains consistent year to year

Resource E: Creating a Plan for Moving Forward

*See p. 37 for a blank plan.

Sample Plan

During Phase 2, VISTA members may need to re-evaluate the goals they have for the remainder of their VISTA term. Oftentimes, the needs of an organization will change, funding will vary, and projects will take longer than originally anticipated. Use this resource to facilitate a conversation about the potential challenges moving forward and the resources the VISTA needs to overcome those challenges.

Member Activity from VAD	Non-Capacity Building Activities	Capacity Building Activities	Sustainable Activity
	Conduct individual training with	Create presentations for trainings,	
	current volunteers, provide new	set a calendar for training frequency,	
Develop systems for screening	volunteers with a brief orientation	design training handouts and	Develop volunteer handbook with procedures,
and matching mentors.	as needed	resources	create a train-the-trainer curriculum
Comments on progress made	le to date		
At this point, the majority of time h	as been spent focusing on the curr	ent volunteer needs of the organization	ns.
The VISTA has been working to re	ecruit and train volunteers that are in	n immediate need and generally answe	rs procedural questions as they arise
Next steps and/or goals mo	ving forward		
Non-Capac	city Building	Potential Challenges	Solutions/Alternatives
1. Ongoing support of current vol	unteers		
Capacity	Building		
1. Determine the best method to t	raining volunteers in larger groups,		
create a suggested training sche	dule for next year		
2. Evaluate existing presentation	s and create additional resources	VISTA does not know what information	
		should/shouldn't be included	so they can use existing resources
			as a starting point
Sustai	inability		
1. Compile various resources into			
volunteer to reference during thei	•		
Create a train-the-trainer curri	culum so various staff members.	Volunteers might not be interested in	VISTA could approach local colleges
volunteers, etc. can share the rol		taking on additional responsibility	about creating a work study position
	-		that would assist with volunteers
			!

Resource F: Stop, Start, Continue

The Leader can help VISTA members re-focus when they experience challenges with their assignments. VISTA members can only control certain aspects of their position, and the Leader can help them identify changes to make as an individual that will potentially influence their perspective on the challenges faced. This resource guides this reflection on what members should stop, start, and continue doing to effectively deal with challenges.

CHALLENGE	STOP	START	CONTINUE
The committee that is guiding the development of an afterschool program is not making much progress. The VISTA can't move forward until the committee makes decisions about the direction they want to take.	 Getting frustrated during meetings Feeling responsible for the lack of progress 	 Bringing detailed agendas to meetings to keep the conversation on track Drafting as much material as possible and filling in the details later 	To be respectful at meetings and remember that this is their program

Resource G: Transferrable Skills

Think back on your year. Underline the skills you have used and developed as you have worked to achieve goals, reach objectives, and conduct activities. Consider how you can transfer these skills toward future projects as you build toward your personal and professional goals.

Goal Achieved :		
Objectives Reached:		
Activities Cond	lucted:	
Transferrable Skills:		
Key Skills:	Leadership:	Team Skills:
-Meet deadlines	- Arrange social functions	- Patient
-Ability to delegate	- Motivate people	- Persuasive
-Innovative	- Negotiate agreements	- Pleasant
-Computer literate	- Empower others	- Sensitive
-Verbal & written	- Results oriented	- Supportive
communication	- Mediate disagreements	- Diplomatic
-Independent worker	- Self-motivated	- Public speaking
-Organization & project	- Decisive	- Helpful
management	- Results oriented	- Insightful
-Problem solver	- Can share leadership	- Interview others
-Time management	- Direct projects	- Anticipate needs
-Accepts responsibility	- Team builder	- High energy
-Results oriented	- Problem solver	- Open minded
-Ability to plan	- Can take calculated risks	- Can take orders
		- Listener
		- Trust
		- Negotiator
		- Understanding
Analostical Chille	Communication Skills:	- Adaptable
Analytical Skills:	- Articulate	Creative & Artistic Skills:
- Logical		-Artistic
- Take & track inventory - Detail oriented	- Innovative	- Music appreciation - Dance, body movement
- Count, observe, compile	- Accurate - Digest information	- Perform, act
- Classify data	quickly	- Perform, act
- Manage budgets	- Public speaker	- Present artistic ideas
- Balance budgets	- Write clearly	- Play an instrument
- Audit records	- Understand the big	- Expressive
- Keep financial records	picture	LAPICOSIVE
- Analyze data or facts	- Outgoing	
- Investigate & research	- Multi-lingual	
0	Ŭ	

Resource H: VISTA Member & Site Successor Future Plans



Future planning is about organizing areas of your life in a concise, simple manner that reflects your style and understanding. This can allow you to make decisions about your future that reflect the path you want to take to accomplish your dreams. Future planning involves taking time to review and evaluate past experiences and choices and recognize their value.

The first page has directions for the VISTA Leader to carry out with each of the VISTA members, while the worksheets should be completed by the VISTA members.

Starting with the end in mind

Steps:

- 1. Send a mini survey with the following open-ended questions to VISTAs on your team.
 - What are you thinking about doing post VISTA?
 - o Another term, Peace Corps, school, job, not sure, etc.
 - Please provide more detail on the answer you chose above?
 - Where do you plan to live?
 - What lifestyle do you wish to have?
- 2. Use a collaboration website or discussion board such as Trello (www.trello.com) to encourage VISTAs to share resources. Create categories with post-VISTA plans from the survey.
- 3. Send VISTAs the following VISTA Member and Site Successor Future Plans resources. Ask VISTAs to review the questions in the VISTA Member Future Plans resource and answer where appropriate prior to your phase check-in. They should begin to develop a sustainability binder from the questions in the Site Successor Future Plans resource to pass on to the successor at their site.
- 4. Check in with VISTAs individually and go over each question, ask clarifying questions, and strongly encourage VISTAs to meet with site supervisors to share gained insights.

VISTA Member Future Plans

Values

What drives you? What do you value?

Prioritize your top 5 values:

3. 5.

4.

Examples -

Helpfulness:: Creativity:: Passion:: Wisdom:: Knowledge:: Intellectual Stimulation

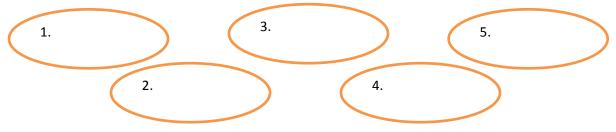
Life priorities

What are the most important aspects of your life?

2.

TT TIGE OF COTO THOSE	That are the most important aspects of your life.			

Prioritize your top 5 life areas:



Examples -

Career:: Family:: Financial Security:: Health:: Community Service:: Spirituality:: Children:: Vacations:: Self:: Business:: Home:: Play:: Self Acceptance:: Friends: :Fun:: Relaxation:: Marriage:: Contribution:: Pets:: Prosperity:: Hobbies:: Body:: Fame:: Personal Growth:: Emotional Well-Being::

Recognition:: Travel:: Learning

Activities
Think back on all of the projects you have completed. Identify the activities you completed as you worked toward your VAD objectives from your VAD. Review your VAD and Project Plan for examples.
Objective 1:

Activities	
Objective 2: Activities	
Objective 3: Activities	
From the objectives above, list a few activities that y want to gain more experience with. Rate these activitien enjoy and 5 being a highly enjoyable activity.	
,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	
Task	Personal rating
	either the following categories or categories of
Take some time to group the enjoyable tasks using eyour own.	either the following categories or categories of
Take some time to group the enjoyable tasks using eyour own.	either the following categories or categories of
Take some time to group the enjoyable tasks using eyour own.	either the following categories or categories of

Site Successor Future Plans

Use the following questions to help you develop a sustainability binder to pass on to your successor.

Mission Statement

What is the mission statement at your site? (This will help guide the table of contents for your sustainability binder.) If the mission statement is not clear, highlight the top 5 values you associate with your site.

VISTA Site Top 5 values:

1. 3. 5.

Examples - People-oriented:: Higher education:: Funding:: Innovation:: Status quo

Assignment Objectives

Your sustainability binder should include all of the assignment objectives that you and your site supervisor have decided are important for your successor. The following questions will help you prioritize those objectives to make this sustainability binder an effective reference for your successor.

Prioritize your top 5 assignment objectives:

1. 3. 5.

Examples -

Volunteer management:: Research:: Grantwriting

Sustainability Binder Table of Contents

Use the top 5 assignment objectives along with your VAD to organize the table of contents.

Objective # 1:	
Progress to-date	
Successes	
Challenges	
Value to Site	
Recommendations	
Objective # 2:	
Progress to-date	
Successes	
Challenges	
Value to Site	
Recommendations	
Objective # 3:	
Progress to-date	
Successes	
Successes	
ChallengesValue to Site	
Recommendations	
Objective # 4:	
Progress to-date	
Successes	
Challenges	
Value to Site	
Recommendations	
Objective # 5:	
Progress to-date	
Successes	
Challenges	
Value to Site	
Recommendations	

Check out the following sustainability binder resource for additional ideas: http://tulane.edu/cps/programs/upload/Creating-a-Sustainability-Binder.pdf.

Links

- General AmeriCorps Resources:
 - VISTA Campus www.vistacampus.org
 - EnCorps http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/
 - National Service Online Learning Center http://learning.nationalserviceresources.org/
- Asset Mapping:
 - Asset Based Community Development Institute http://www.abcdinstitute.org/toolkit/
 - > The Coady International Institute http://www.coady.stfx.ca/knowledge/
 - ➤ The Department of Public Instruction in Madison, WI, coordinates asset mapping at all their VISTA Project sites. These are a few sample asset maps, both visual and text based. https://sites.google.com/a/dpi.wi.gov/dpi-vista-project/resources-1/asset-maps
- On-Site Orientation:
 - VISTA Campus Materials
 - 1. go to VISTA Campus (http://vistacampus.org/),
 - 2. select the "Supervisors" tab,
 - 3. scroll to the bottom of the page and click the "Campus Catalog" tab, and
 - 4. scroll down to the section entitled "Orienting your VISTA."
 - EnCorps Materials on On-Site Orientations http://encorps.nationalserviceresources.org/mo_home.php
- Sustainability Binders:
 - Kansas Campus Compact Guide to Creating a Sustainability Binder http://tulane.edu/cps/programs/upload/Creating-a-Sustainability-Binder.pdf
- Post-VISTA Resources:
 - ➤ General Post-VISTA Resources
 - VISTA Campus Alumni Materials
 - 1. go to VISTA Campus (http://vistacampus.org/), and
 - 2. select the "Alumni" tab
 - AmeriCorps Alumni Association http://www.americorpsalums.org/
 - ➤ Thinking about . . .
 - Another AmeriCorps/VISTA Term
 - http://www.americorps.gov
 - VISTA Campus Forums- http://vistacampus.org/
 - Peace Corps
 - Peace Corps http://www.peacecorps.gov/
 - AmeriCorps Alumni Association Peace Corps Webinar http://www.americorpsalums.org/?CareerWebinars
 - School
 - http://edaward.org/
 - AmeriCorps.gov lists schools that match the Education Award.
 http://www.americorps.gov/for organizations/highered/ed-award-match.asp
 - Career/Job
 - AmeriCorps Alumni Association Job board and Workshops http://www.americorpsalums.org/
 - VISTA Campus Job Board http://vistacampus.org/

Sample VAD

Title: Mentor Recruitment and Management Systems Designer

Sponsoring Organization: Waketa Community Services (WCS)

Project Name: MentorCorps **Project Number:** 12ABCD345

Project Period: 08/20/20XX - 08/19/20YY

Site Name (if applicable):

Focus Area(s)
Primary: Education

Note:

If your VAD is not accepted, the State Office will note the reason(s) why here.

VISTA Assignment Objectives and Member Activities

Goal of the Project: To help ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive the educational, social, and emotional support they need to help them break the cycle of poverty, the MentorCorps VISTA project will build the capacity of WCS by developing a sustainable volunteer recruitment and management system for its mentoring program.

Objective of the Assignment (8/20/20XX - 2/01/20YY)

Assess the current state of WCS' efforts in reaching, selecting, and supporting volunteer mentors, and create or revise policies, procedures, and documents to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the mentor-recruitment and matching system.

Member Activities:

- 1. Research the history of volunteer programs at WCS.
 - a. Identify strengths and challenges of the current program. Based on this report, make a plan for improvement.
- 2. Develop systems for screening and matching mentors.

Objective of the Assignment (1/01/20YY - 8/19/20YY)

Set up outreach systems and build partnerships with community organizations in order to spread the word out about the mentor program. Develop targeted marketing materials.

Member Activities:

- 1. Plan for outreach and recruitment.
 - a. Identify skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors.
 - b. Write volunteer task descriptions that include: qualifications, activities, benefits, time commitment, and other expectations.
 - c. Develop partnerships with community organizations whose members are possible mentors or who can support the organization in other ways.
 - d. Develop partnerships with people or organizations that understand the needs of children of prisoners and can assist with the training and support of mentors.
- 2. Market the program to targeted audiences.

Blank Resource Templates

Resource A: VISTA Project Action Plan Matrix *Adapted from Project STAR VISTA Matrix resource

	Activity Area	Objective (from VAD)	Member Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
nd Resources	Volunteer Generation		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →		
Organizational Infrastructure and Resources	Resource Development		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →		
Organizational	Technology		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →		
Awareness	Community Awareness		Planning- Action Items → Implementation- Action Items → Sustainability- Action Items →		

	Partnerships	Planning-
	and Collaborative efforts	Action Items →
		Implementation-
		Action Items →
		Sustainability-
		Action Items →
	Community	Planning-
	Assessment	Action Items →
		Implementation-
		Action Items →
 ent		Sustainability-
l H		Action Items →
dol	Policies and	Planning-
vel	Procedures	Action Items →
Community Development		Implementation-
4		Action Items →
ini		Sustainability-
m		Action Items →
l m	Community	Planning-
Ü	Training	Action Items →
		Implementation-
		Action Items →
		Sustainability-
		Action Items →
	Curriculum	Planning-
<u>+</u>	Development	Action Items →
ıen		Implementation-
Program Development		Action Items →
		Sustainability-
		Action Items →
Ď	Marketing	Planning-
m		Action Items →
grï		Implementation-
ro		Action Items →
1		Sustainability-
		Action Items ->

Resource E: Creating a Plan for Moving Forward

Member Activity from VAD	Non-Capacity Building Activities	Capacity Building Activities	Sustainable Activity
, .		· · ·	,
Comments on progress made to dat	e		
Next steps and/or goals moving for	ward		
Non-Capac	ity Building	Potential Challenges	Solutions/Alternatives
Capacity	Building		
Sustai	nability		